

HB 4025 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Economic Development and Trade

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/5

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Legislative Policy and Research Director to study methods for supporting economic resilience in communities affected by emergencies or disasters declared by the Governor. Requires report to the emergency preparedness and economic development committees of the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2018. Requires Oregon Business Development Department to assist the director if requested. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

On November 14, 2017, the House Interim Committee on Economic Development and Trade heard presentations about the economic impacts and recovery efforts of the 2017 fire season, including job cuts, drops in sales in affected areas, and cancelation of major events due to the fires, smoke, and road closures. Wildfire recovery councils were formed in the Columbia Gorge and southwest Oregon to assess the impacts of the fire, prioritize assistance needs, and work with Regional Solutions to coordinate state agency tools. These councils identified needs, including access to capital for small businesses, environmental recovery, public safety, and protecting regional brands as business and tourist destinations.

House Bill 4025 requires the Legislative Policy and Research Director to study methods for supporting economic resilience in communities affected by emergencies or disasters declared by the Governor, including identifying challenges related to capital access, potential gaps in federal and state lending programs for small businesses, and best practices from other states. The measure requires the Oregon Business Development Department to assist the director, if requested, and the director to report to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2018.